

General overview of the contents of the tract *De Sacramentis in Genere*

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The following outline will follow this schema of the study.

1. Nature of the study

> *Sacred doctrine is the basis for a healthy interior life.*

- If sacred theology and the interior life are divorced, the interior life is rendered lifeless; the mind becomes filled with signs that are devoid of meaning.
- All doctrine comes from the study of contemplation; thus the study of theology is a great grace for what is studied on earth is then contemplated in Heaven.
- Sound theology is thus rooted in sound faith:
 - Theologian must be person of faith so that the intellect is harmonized with Christian mystery; theologian must therefore be a person of prayer.
 - Theologian is to constantly restore desire to seek the truth.

Fathers of the Council of Trent proceeded to formulate canons on the Sacraments because all are justified and saved through the Sacraments.

- All the Sacraments point towards the Eucharist as the *Sacramentum sacramentorum*.
- Church is a social entity (salvation in community); believers must be united with the hierarchy so that the individual can share in the divine life more fully (i.e. formal membership in the Church).

2. Concept of Sacramentality

Sacred signs exist in humanity in general; signs and symbols are manifold expression of religion.

- Man's nature is rooted in the symbolic; as God impressed His image and likeness upon man, all creaturely things can be signs of the divine (although these fall short in adequacy of representation of the divinity).
- Symbols and signs can be perverted into use for magical behavior, which really amount to attempts at a forced revelation of divinity.
- A great and authentic yearning for the divine present in signs is proper to Christianity.

y *Modern look at man's need for symbols reveals a curious paradox.*

- In an age of man's supposed dominance over nature by technology, man tends to forget that he is made in God's image and likeness; signs are not discovered as footprints of God but rather those of men.
- Hence, man would only seem to encounter himself, which makes the capacity towards the symbolic superfluous; modern man can, at best, perceive conventions.
- However, despite this, there seems to be a resurgence of symbolic consciousness:
 - In philosophy, symbols are employed to convey structure and impose order upon the confusing realities of the world (evident in the spoken word and the arts).
 - Natural science admits that it cannot really get down to the essence of reality; images are needed to express propositions (e.g., wave theory, mathematical calculus, etc.).
 - Psychology employs archetypes and psychic symbols that heed to the function and healing of man.

> *Why does man have an aptitude for symbols?*

- Such an aptitude is rooted in man's very nature; man possesses something in common with all levels of creation.
- The body animated by the soul is symbolic of man's reflection of the totality of creation (in the sense that man is both spiritual and material); man's nature requires him to express constantly by signs and symbols.
- Real symbolic power is unveiled in light of faith based on divine revelation:
 - Liturgy is the expression of symbolism in the highest degree (or used to be).
 - *Symbolic action of the Sacraments is the meeting of God with man through sacred signs:* Christ is the image of the Father and thus is the axis of all symbolic trajectories of the Sacraments.

> *The sense of the Greek word **mysterion**.*

- In pagan antiquity, *mysterion* pertained to cultic events of old which were open only to a select few; candidate is brought into union with the gods (a divinization of sorts), which was also possible by acquired knowledge of the gods through philosophy.
- In the Old Testament, *mysterion* pertains to wisdom (*hokmah*) and to eschatological topics revealed by God and veiled in images (cf. Wis. 6, 7).
- In the New Testament, *mysterion* is regarded as something transcending creation, which points towards God's plan

and actions for the salvation of the world.

- Properly, it denotes a mysterious decision of God's will regarding His creation which was gradually revealed in time and history? through God's own Word and deed.
- This mystery is eternally with God and ultimately revealed through Christ, which was announced by the prophets, continued by the Apostles, and safeguarded by the Church.

Content of this mystery.

- In the pre-Christian world, salvation pertained to natural needs, those being primarily the fulfillment of natural desires and the prolongation of life.
- In the New Testament:
 - Christ's work is not based on social or political reform, although it certainly has salutary effects on the social and political order.
 - Christ's work of salvation must be viewed against the background of sin: salvation consists in the remission of sin which permits for a sharing in the life of the Trinity.
 - *Acceptance of this fulness into the divine life comprises the very essence of the mystery*, salvation is the process of the readmitting of man into God's grace.
 - The mystery of God cannot be grasped by the natural light of reason; thus the grace of faith is necessary for acceptance of the effects of salvation.

Christ, Revealer and Revealed of God's mystery.

- Holy Writ demonstrates God's salvific plan to be summarized and fulfilled in Christ; Christ is the Revealer and content, core and essence of the mystery (cf. 1 Col 1:26).
- Grasp of the Sacraments depends upon the accomplishment of the mystery in time; words, deeds, signs, and events of the Old Testament become preliminary hints of salvation and precursors of Christian worship.
- In Old Testament revelation, signs of salvation are models of Christianity:
 - Many forms were ambiguous and lapses into pagan rites were frequent which required a repeated need to correct false attitudes; mechanical practices and "magical" intent blurred the religious message.
 - Positive meaning of the forms are contained in the anti-cultic statements of God and the prophets.
- Christ did not call into question the validity of the Old Testament signs since He made use of them; the early Church saw these as signs foreshadowing the worship of the Mystical Body.
 - Testimonies of the Church fathers and ancient writers support this:
 - *St. Irenaeus*. Old Testament signs are a foreshadowing sign of the mystery of salvation in the New Testament.
 - *Pertullian*'. Signs of the Old Testament are a "mirror" of what is to come.
 - *St. Hilary of Poitiers*'. All of history before Christ is a *signum pronosticum Christi*.
 - Old covenant is a pre-accomplishment of the mystery revealed by Christ.
 - *St. Augustine*'. Change in sacramental ordinances made after coming of Him whose advent they prefigured, but no change in faith or object (Christ) after advent.
 - Israel is a preliminary sketch which God accomplished and effected in Christ and His Church.

3. Jesus Christ as the primordial sacrament of redemption

'ni Christ is the center and goal of all of salvation history, and is the embodiment of God's secret: 'He who sees Me sees the Father.' (St. Jn 14:9).

- Sacraments are concentrated in Christ (as He is their source) before they are separated in the liturgy; individual Sacraments of the Church, though distinct, are not mere isolated signs or separate rites.
- If Christ is a sacrament, then it is not necessary to explain origin of the Sacraments by some specific word of Christ, but they can be derived from the actions of the God-man.

How can a person be a Sacrament?

- If *Sacrament* is taken to mean the individual Sacraments themselves, including the matter of cultic rites, and individual symbols, then *sacrament* in this application cannot be predicated of any individual person.
- Christ is sacrament, taken in the sense that He possesses a unique form of actualizing the distinct Sacraments (as

He is the principle of actualization of the Sacraments).

- Testimony of the New Testament and Tradition:
 - Christ is called the *mysterium Dei*, as He is a mysterious visible appearance of the invisible God; St. Paul directly references Christ to be such.
 - *St. Deo the Great. Christus primum et maximum Sacramentum.*
 - *St. Augustine*. The flesh of the God-man is a sign veiling the divine nature while simultaneously containing it; a sacrament of divinity and humanity in the Word made Flesh.
 - *Origen*: In Christ's humanity, God developed a visible sign and that He has come so near to us that we can almost touch Him.
- Movement of *mysterium* to *sacramentum*
 - Mystery of Christ is not just a fact, but also an event that affects and involves man as a deed, an action.
 - Christ is therefore a type of all the Sacraments, as each mirrors Christ in some way.

> *Sacramental significance of Christ's life and work.*

- Christ's motive was to effect salvation of man (cf. St. Mt 1:21) and His deeds efficaciously brought about man's salvation; all works and deeds of Christ's life had a salvific character:
 - *St. Ignatius of Antioch*. The mysteries of Jesus' life all possessed saving redemptive meaning and must be understood sacramentally, taking place under the veils of simple human realities.
- A purely humanistic view of Christ removes all worth from the Sacraments; the symbolic and sacramental aspects wholly disappear.
- Deeds and works of our Lord must be understood as *mysterium* or *sacramentum*.
 1. *Work of salvation penetrated human history and was accomplished by words and deeds.*
 - Faith recognizes this (e.g. baptism, temptation of Christ, etc.) and that redemption took place in a profoundly palpable, touchable human reality.
 - Tradition understands this in a moral sense and venerates the humanity of Christ; truly sacramental thinking takes this even deeper.
 - Sacraments are the actions of the Word Incarnate on the world and man through history:
 - Man is called to cooperate with his own individual redemption (secondary causality).
 - Celebration of the Sacraments is likened to a drama: man enters into each Sacrament's respective encounter with Christ, while simultaneously suppressing subjectivism and overdone collectivism.
 2. *Sacramental significance of the words of Christ.*
 - Redemption is a verbal event; deeds cannot be separated from the words accompanying them.
 - In revelation, deed and word are linked in a necessary inner moral unity.
 - Christ completed revelation by revealing God to be with man; as revelation means *God speaking*, the person of the Incarnate Word profoundly indicates that God is speaking to man.
 - Salvific event linked also to Christ's preaching: *This is why I have come, to preach the word.* (cf. St. Mark 3:30).
 - Christ's words are so powerful that they are likened to deeds; miracles are often worked with words alone.
 - Sacraments are as a word that evokes a person's response; preaching and proclamation accompanying the Sacraments include a reply from man.
 - God's words and works reach their ultimate goal when these return to Him (cf. Is 55:11); return of the words marks the glorification of God.

> *Mystery of the hypostatic union is the existential basis for calling Christ a sacrament.*

- Without confusion, change, division, or separation, Christ is true God and true man.
- In the Person of the God-man, there is a link-up of divine power and sensible sign:
 - ***A Sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible divine reality***, for this reason, Christ the Incarnate Word can be called a sacrament, for in Him appears grace and the effects of it.
 - The Incarnation is the epiphany of divine nature and can be conceived of as a sacrament; *thus the attitude towards the Sacraments is drawn from the attitudes towards Christology* (A observation of modern day required).

> *Individual Sacraments as the unfolding of the primordial sacrament (Christ)*

- All individual Sacraments are images of the prototype; all are traceable back to Christ and have their roots in Him and achieve their efficacy from Him.
- Each Sacrament has an impress of Christ, that is, a different kind of transformation in Christ whose effects permit man to conform more and more to Him
- This points to the distinction among sacramental graces:
 - All the Sacraments pertain to some aspect of life; Baptism establishes a conformity to the life of Christ which cannot be changed by the other Sacraments, all which serve to further deepen and increase this conformity.
 - Through the Sacraments, man is drawn upward into the mystery of Christ until, by the graces communicated, Christ is formed in him.

4. The Church considered as a total sacrament of Jesus Christ

Christ transformed man by establishing the order of grace by which man is saved.

- The Church's visible structure bears analogous resemblance (in the order of effect) to the visible manifestation of the Word Incarnate.
- The Church is a kind of sacrament (taken in an analogous sense) due to its union with God.
 - It is the sign and instrument of the invisible grace of God; the Church, by fulfilling its threefold office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing is the redemptive visible instrument of salvation.

5. Means of grace in the successive stages of human history before Christ

1. *Original justice and innocence*

- Disputed question as to whether the true Sacraments could exist in this state.
 - St. Thomas says **NO** (this is more reasonable):
 - In a state that was of itself holy, man did not require means towards sanctification; in regard to the marriage of Adam and Eve, their marriage was a matter of nature and it was not until later that it embodied a Sacrament.
 - St. Augustine says **YES** (this is more pious):
 - The tree of life was a source of miraculous immortality of the body and a visible Sacrament of invisible knowledge.
 - The marriage of Adam and Eve was a mystic union representing Christ and the Church; however, Augustine is unclear as to whether he was talking about the conference of grace.

2. *After the Fall until the establishment of the Mosaic Law*

- Although man lost his state of innocence, he still possessed the natural law.
- Some authors hold that the promise contained in the Protoevangelium had some kind of Sacramental effect, labeling it as a "sacrament of nature", but this term is unclear.

3. *Establishment of the Mosaic Law*

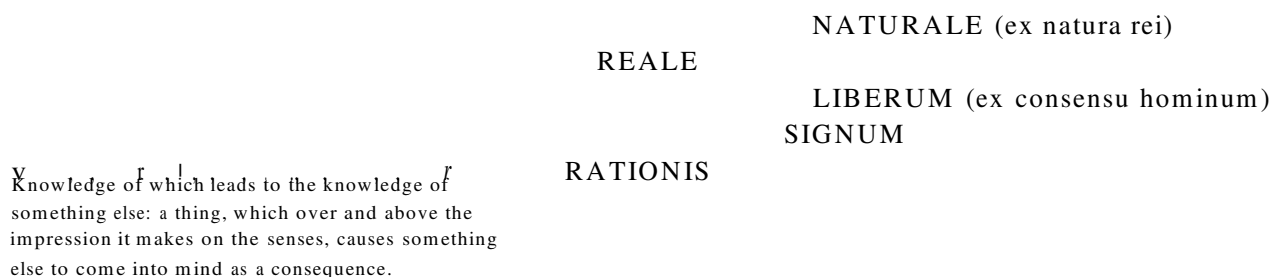
- Circumcision became the path to salvation, serving as a mark justifying faith.
- Circumcision differed from Baptism in two ways:
 1. The former is a rite by which spiritual generation is external whereas it is inward in Baptism.
 2. Circumcision itself was empty; it did not wipe out Original Sin causally (as does Baptism) but instrumentally.

6. Basic Structure of Sacramental Signs

➤ *Sacramentum* has three senses'.

1. In the *legalforensic sense*, it is taken to be a sum of money deposited *in hire* by both of the litigants in a suit; party that loses forfeits the deposit.
2. In a *military sense*, it is taken to mean an oath of loyalty (esp. in ancient Rome) made by one officer on behalf of a legion; earlier usage of the term included all the soldiers in general, but was later reduced to the oath itself.
3. In the *sacred sense*, which is pertinent to the subject at hand:
 - St. Jerome used *sacramentum* when translating *mysterion*, and never used the term to apply to sacred rites.
 - The Church Fathers appealed to *sacramentum* when discussing the profession of faith; it was later applied to Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation.
 - St. Cyril's *Mystagogia Catecheses* applied *sacramentum* to God's saving plan worked out in history.
 - Tertullian used the term *sacramentum* in reference to an oath that called one to the army of God by words of the Sacrament.
 - St. Augustine used the term in reference *to rites that conferred grace*, *sacramentum* would be used in this context more and more within ecclesiastical documents of successive centuries.
 - By the twelfth century, *sacramentum* came to be used in reference to the seven Sacraments exclusively, which demonstrates the progression from an analogical meaning to a univocal meaning of a rite that is somehow efficacious of grace: thus we arrive at the definition of sacrament as being *an efficacious sign instituted by Christ which confers grace*.
 - Metaphysically, *sacramentum pertinet signum rei sacrae in quantum est sanctificans homines*.
 - Physically, *pertinet sensibile elementum significans rem sacram in quantum est sanctificans homines*.

'r *Only visible signs of internal sanctification are properly called Sacraments: an efficacious sign of sanctifying grace.*

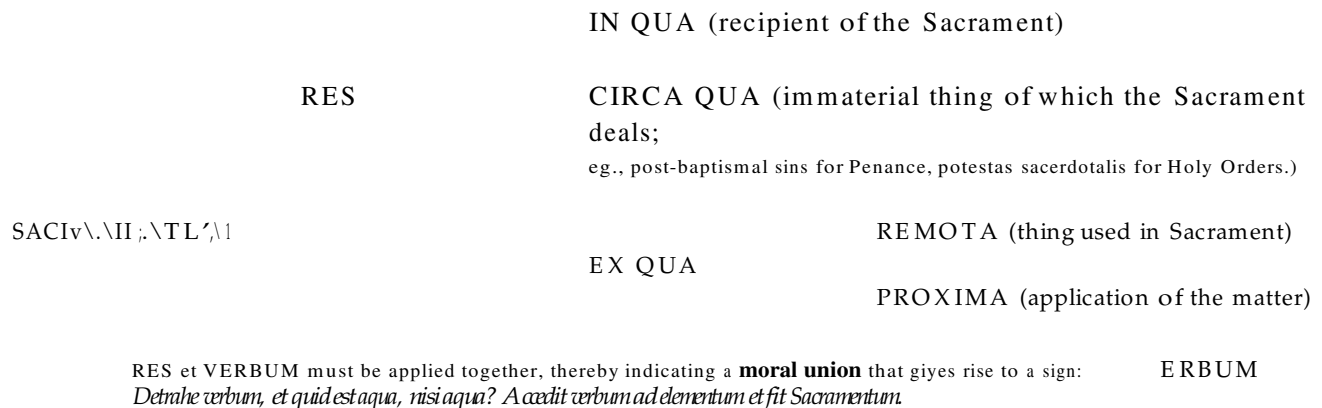


- A connection must exist between the *sign* and the *thing that it signifies*'.
- The Sacraments are not purely *signum naturale* because their signification is due to a free act of the will of God, nor are they purely conventional signs either; the Sacraments are deeply significant signs of grace:

- *speculatively*, in that they symbolize what they stand for, and:
- *practically*, as they symbolize and *do (effect)* what they symbolize.
- Sacramental signs are chiefly *demonstrative* because they effect sanctifying grace here and now, while they are secondarily *commemorative* (referring to the past) and *prognostic* (pointing to future).
- Sacramental signs of the New Testament belong to all three categories, since these all recall the Passion and foretell the future glory of the elect.

7. Matter and form [res et verbum]

- *Matter and form are the essential constituents of a Sacrament* (cf. Denz. 695, *Decree to Armenians* of Eugenius IV).
- Every Sacrament requires three parts: things for its matter, words for the form, and proper intention of the minister (which will be dealt with later on).
- The only Sacrament which can be strictly proved from the New Testament regarding matter and form is Baptism.
- Holy Writ provides an intonation of matter and form for three other Sacraments: 1. Confirmation (Acts 8:15ff); 2. Eucharist (Mt 26:26); 3. Holy Unction (James 6:14).
- Tradition supplies for what is lacking in Holy Writ.



- Matter and form comprise a Sacrament as they do a being (thing): words pertain to form (determining principle of a thing is the form) and sensible thing pertains to the matter, (cf. Illa q.60)

8. Res et Sacramentum

How is the determining principle contained in form?

- The form is morally united with the matter; specific words (form) possess a logical priority to the matter.
- The words recited determine the purpose for which that matter is being used, providing an unambiguous designation of purpose (despite what we sometimes see nowadays).

Threefold distinction in defining sacrament (from letter of Innocent III to Archbishop of Lyons, 1202).

1. *Sacramentum tantum* (visible form): external/outward sign with the purpose to make something.
2. *res et Sacramentum* (truth of body): permanent element that is effected.
 - For example, in regards to the Holy Eucharist, the *res et Sacramentum* is the reality that holds permanence in rite and grace it signifies (the Body and Blood of Christ, that is, the Real

Presence); the sacred species are the signs of the reality of the sacramental rite and grace received (nourishment of charity).

3. *res tantum* (spiritual power): pertains to the grace of the Sacrament (*res et non Sacramentum*).

➤ *Effects are different for each Sacrament, since each specific Sacrament signifies a specific effect.*

- All the Sacraments of the New Law ought both to signify the graces they effect and effect the graces they signify; this pertains chiefly to the form since the matter is determined by the form.
- In the case of Confirmation, the matter symbolizes the effects of the Sacrament: the constituent parts of the chrism signify the multiple effects of the Holy Ghost (e.g., olive oil's unctuous and fluid nature pertains to strength which stands for the plenitude of graces received; balm's soothing and healing qualities pertain to preservation, another intended effect of the Sacrament).

9. Efficacy of the Sacraments (*ex opere operato*)

➤ *Objections to sacramental efficacy:*

- Protestants object to this based on their erroneous notion of faith and an idea of justification coming through presumptuous trust in God's promises.
- Luther held the Sacraments to be mere present visible reminders which did not effect what they signify; to replace the Sacraments, Luther came up with the idea of *fides reflexiva* (a radical form of personalism).
- Luther's *Small Catechism* has excessive use of the first -person singular pronouns (I, me, my); the profession of faith first applies to the ego of the believer; faith in God is comprised in the fact that He made *me* and is thus a guarantee of the believer's eternal beatitude (we can see where this is going); thus the Word of God is the only real sacrament.
- This is contrary to the Catholic Creed, which speaks of God and His relation to the world as a whole: the believer asserts to the articles, and thus there is no use of the first person in the *content* of the Creed.
- For Luther, the Church is merely an appendage, which starts upon and is centered on the ego; an association of individuals with purpose of the preservation of faith and remission of sin.
- Pure Christian faith (Catholicism) is a wilful self-donation to the transcendence of God; the maturing of faith causes one to focus less and less upon self and more upon God.
 - Life of Church indicates that she has constantly baptized infants and insane, absolved the unconscious; none of these are capable of an act of faith and this shows that justification must come by the Sacraments as well (which in themselves are also good works).

➤ *Sacramental efficacy: ex opere operato (in virtue of the work performed).*

- The minister, by an act of uniting matter and form, gives rise to a Sacrament which imparts grace from Christ.
- In the positive sense, a valid Sacrament confers grace through an instrumental supernatural power conferred by Christ; this does not exclude the action of the minister and the recipient:
 - The minister does not confer efficacy but gives *esse* to the Sacrament (thus he exercises a causal role, although it is secondary in character).
 - The adult recipient must dispose himself to the grace Christ confers by the Sacrament.
- Christ acts to produce grace *ex opere operato* which also can be referred to as *ex opere operantis Christi*.
- Scriptural evidence:
 - For Baptism, cf. Jn 3:5, Titus 3:5, Acts 2:3; for Confirmation, cf. Acts 8:17-18; Holy Orders, cf. 2 Tim 1:6; the Eucharist, cf. Jn 6; Penance, cf. Jn 20:22-23; Holy Anointing, cf. James

5:14.

- Testimony of the Fathers and ancient writers:
 - *Tertullian (De Baptisma)*: “Is it not wonderful that death should be washed away by bathing?”
 - *St. Ambrose (De Sacramentis 1,5)*: That water heals which has the grace of Christ... Work of water is the operation of the Holy Ghost.”
 - *St. Cyril of Alexandria (Comm, de Joanne)*: “Material water through the operation of the Spirit is changed into a divine unspeakable virtue, sanctifying all those on whom it is poured.”
 - *St. Augustine (Contra Costo. 4,16,19)*: “Water sanctifies on account of Him who sanctified.”
 - *Tertullian (De Resurrectione Carnis 8)*: “Flesh washed, anointed, and fed with the Body and Blood of Christ to be cleansed, sanctified, and nourished.”
- Council of Trent set out to define *ex opere operato* with the intention of defending the objective aspect of the Sacraments; Sacraments are frustrated in effect when an obstacle is placed before it.
 - The efficacy of the Sacrament *ex opere operato* presupposes a proper disposition of the recipient; Sacraments produce their effect *ex opere operato*, thus the words constituting the form are consecratory in a true sense.
 - Ceremonies surrounding the Sacraments serve to edify faith and serve as outward pledges of the divine promise; Sacraments are primarily practical signs and secondarily theoretical.
- *Continere gratia: Sacraments of the New Law contain grace that they signify.*
 - Grace is defined as an entitative habit which modifies the substance of a soul; thus habitual grace is a permanent quality that God infuses into a soul which intrinsically adheres in it by which a man becomes holy.
 - The Sacraments effect a real change in the recipient, that is, a sanctification and renovation of the interior man by a voluntary reception of God’s grace merited by Christ (cf. 1 Pet 1:4, 1 Cor 3:16, Rom 8:17, Acts 3:19, Eph 2:8-10, Rom 8:11, 1 Cor 6:15, Jn 1:12-13, 2 Cor 3:18).
 - Sacraments *contain* the grace that they impart, and are not the *cause* of the grace (thus it is not correct to say that the Sacraments produce grace).
 - Ordinary and normal means of God’s helping grace is through the Sacraments: all the Sacraments confer sanctifying grace and their own specific sacramental grace.
 1. *Sanctifying grace* is imparted to all those who receive the Sacraments worthily, and establishes or increases a soul’s ordering towards God.
 - Sacraments of the living (Confirmation, Eucharist, Orders, Matrimony, and Holy Anointing) increase sanctifying grace in all those who are already justified.
 - Sacraments of the dead (Baptism, Penance) confer sanctifying grace where it had not been before or had been previously lost.
 - Sanctifying grace represents the well-spring of the Sacraments; same grace conferred by all the Sacraments but has different function (Baptism = birth, Eucharist = nourishment).
 2. *Sacramental grace*
 - If all the Sacraments only imparted sanctifying grace, there would really be no reason for seven of them, since they would all impart the same thing essentially.
 - The Church is clear that all seven Sacraments are necessary for salvation, but not necessary for each individual, (cf. Trent, *De Sacramentis*, can. 4)
 - If the Sacraments contain grace, then different sacramental signs must effect different graces; thus the number of signs equals the number of graces (cf. Acts 1:16: “ Baptism

but not yet received the fulness of the Holy Ghost.” in reference to the specific graces of Confirmation).

- Sacraments differ in dignity and in worth, (cf. Trent, *De Sacramentis*, can. 3)
- According to Suarez, sacramental grace is a “moral claim” to those actual graces which are going to correspond best to that particular Sacrament.
- Sacramental grace is a “perfection” of sanctifying grace which restores the gift of integrity to the soul and empowers one to practice Christian cult and living; reception of the Sacraments is a participation in cult and are manifestations of Christ’s life within the soul.
- Sacramental and sanctifying grace differ morally; sacramental grace is likened to an infused habit flowing from sanctifying grace and is distinct from it.

➤ *Approach to grace itself*

- Suarezian school holds the state of grace to be conceived in a juridical order.
- Thomistic school holds the state of grace to be conceived in physical order giving wide diversified vitality.
- Sacraments are remedies for wounds inflicted upon human nature by original and actual sin; integrity is restored by the Sacraments, which was lost by original sin.
 - Sacraments are designed to confer something that approximates to this balance of integrity; through the Sacraments, the effects rebuild this integrity though it can never be restored to the state it was before the Fall.
 - The special graces associated with Holy Communion help to heal the disorders in the soul from which the lack of charity springs.
- Distinction in the kinds of grace is based upon the kinds of virtue.
 - Virtues are many and diverse, corresponding to the powers of the soul; they are different in functions and thus the grace of the Sacraments are given for different purposes according to different weaknesses from sin (restoration of integrity).
 - Outflow of sacramental graces are a kind of perfection as are the virtues.
 1. From the graces flow an effect to repair the defects of sin.
 2. Grace in the essence of the soul cannot survive without the virtues (especially charity).
 - Different causes produce different effects: the interior character of the Sacraments differ and therefore the graces will differ (e.g., Baptism given against defect of original sin; Confirmation against defect of cowardice).
 - Sacramental grace varies because it seeks to cure specific deficiencies arising from sin; different effects of the Sacraments are like different medicines for sin (different sharings in the Passion of Christ), (cf. De Vert, q.27 a.5 ad 12)
- Sacramental and sanctifying grace are not identical.
 - This doctrine is implicit in revelation when it discusses the application of the redemptive merits of Christ.
 - Sacramental grace is not opposed to sin inasmuch as sin ruins natural goodness of human powers; sacramental grace restores and strengthens integrity within man.
 - *Right or claim to grace* means that one will be supplied with the actual graces needed after the conferral of the Sacraments.

➤ *Recipients of sacramental grace*

- Those who do not place an obstacle (*non ponentibus obicem*) to the effects of the specific Sacrament receive the graces proper to that Sacrament; interior effort of the soul in cooperation with grace needed to attain salvation.

- Mediator Dei: *Sacraments and the Mass contain an efficacy. To have proper effect is to be rightly disposed... Members of the Mystical Body are living members and therefore must deliberately uproot from themselves anything that would obstruct efficacy of grace.*
- If actual reception of the Sacrament is not possible, sacramental graces can be given as God will not deprive any grace that is needed, provided desire and proper interior disposition are there (e.g. Baptism by desire): *Facienti quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam.*

"r- *Measure of sacramental grace.*

- Inflow of the divine life into human character and being requires an appropriate disposition: personal disposition and devotion (*not sentimentalism*^ do play a part in making that grace more abundant.
 - Trent: *Each receives justice in proportion to the providing of the Holy Ghost as He wills, and according to the disposition and cooperation of the recipient.*
- Disposition of the recipient is the measure of sacramental grace
 - Sacraments of the same kind dispense equal amounts of grace to those of equal disposition just as heat of the fire extends equally to all who are the same distance from it.
 - Revelation makes no mention that Sacraments are discriminatory instruments for God's grace; Sacraments are universal so any limitation must arise from the recipient.

10. *Character indelibilis*

- *The indelible character points to a non-renounceable element of the Faith that helps make the Church One and Holy.*
- The Greek *Xapaktnp* can be translated as *signum* or *sigillum* in the Latin, and is rendered as *stamp* or *seal*.
 - Metaphorically, *seal* points towards the essence of a thing; a relationship of possession that is irreversible.
 - Gen 4:15: God gives Cain a mark so no one can kill him.
 - Gen 17:11: Circumcision functions as a token of the covenant between God and His people.
 - Lev 19:28: Forbids cultic custom of the pagans.
- St. Augustine laid the groundwork of positive theology for the indelible character.
 - Character could not be lost; to repeat an unrepeatable Sacrament is to commit an injustice.
 - *St. Bede the Venerable*'. The mark is imprinted on the soul so that the Supreme Judge can recognize His own.
- Link between non-repetition and the sacramental character rose gradually.
 - St. Thomas agreed that the character was a quality, but not like a habit or passive mark or combination of the two, and could not be fully grasped with the Aristotelian categories because it is so encompassed with the supernatural; a *potentia spiritualis* which qualifies or empowers its possessor for supernatural life
 - Central purpose is to configure a disposition to cultic acts; a configuration of the recipient to Christ and giving him a share in Christ's priesthood (*signum configurativum*).
 - The mark further obliges the recipient to perform other acts of sacramental worship (*dispositivum et obligativum*), it serves as the distinguishing sign of degrees within the cultic rank (*distinctivum*).
 - Since the character is the distinguishing sign of cultic rank, it is tied to the outward form of the Sacrament.
 - Florence, 1493: *The indelible spiritual sign that is imprinted on the soul* ; Eucharist, Penance, Anointing, and Matrimony do not imprint this character and can be repeated.

- Holy Writ does not teach existence of this seal explicitly, but implicitly; the testimony from the Church's practice is decisive, as Baptism, Confirmation, and Orders were never repeated, indicating something permanent.
- Area of disagreement on the sacramental character is the *quid sit* and subject: every Christian receives a two-fold deputation:
 1. *Admission to the Beatific Vision* (by way of acquisition of sanctifying grace).
 2. *Deputes man to the worship of God*, character configures us to participation or share in the priesthood of Christ (a sign of and a participation in Christ's priesthood).
- *Character is res et sacramentum.*
 - *Res* because it is an effect of an outward sign signifying grace.
 - *Sacramentum* because being a *potentia*, it proximately disposes man to acts of worship which require grace; character is a *signum gratiae* that signifies the grace that is needed to perform those acts of worship.
- *Subject of the character.*
 - Christian worship is an action of man's faculties; character is to be found in the faculties of the soul (intellect, will).
 - In essence, Christian worship is a protestation of faith that chiefly adheres in the intellect.
 - Trent leaves open the question of whether the character is imprinted on the soul's substance or faculties; every valid Sacrament is a material sign of the effect of grace (and the character is the first effect of the Sacrament, if it confers one).
- *Nature of character*
 - The character is a *potentia* to do or receive, a *qualitas animae*, a spiritual instrumental power.
 - The Church is ordered towards societal worship of God by which the members are made holy; sharing in Christ's priesthood pertains to Christian life.
 - The priest's principal work is to offer sacrifice; Christ had to be a priest in order to sacrifice Himself.

HIERARCHICAL (MINISTERIAL)

PRIESTHOOD

OF PRIVATE WORSHIP (based on grace and exists in any baptizati)

UNIVERSAL

OF PUBLIC WORSHIP (based on the character of Baptism and Confirmation; a spiritual sacrifice expressed liturgically at Mass and manifested externally in the practice of the theological and moral virtues).

- Worship of the Church to God is the Mass and the Sacraments.
 - Participation in these requires empowerment, a sharing in Christ's priesthood, which is effected through the sacramental character.
 - Christian cult is the worship of God by Christ through the worship of the Church; Christ worships God through members marked by the sacramental character.
 - The universal priesthood of the Christian empowers him in an internal and spiritual way to offer spiritual sacrifices and gives ability to take part in Christian worship (Mass and the Sacraments); this is begun by reception of Baptism.
 - Ministerial priesthood is a visible participation in our Lord's priestly powers.
 - Confirmation commissions one to profess Christ publicly; Holy Orders commissions a man to offer ritual public sacrifice and ordain other priests.

11. Institution of the Sacraments

Power of institution

- Christ instituted the seven Sacraments, entrusting them to His Church but with certain limitations (e.g. certain forms of the Sacraments are unchangeable).
- Sacraments are an outward sign of an inward grace and are efficacious; only a Being who can confer grace can produce and have power over efficacy.
 - Institutor must have power to give efficacy to the particular sign:

	AUCTORITATIS DIVINA
POTESTAS	EXCELLENTIAE SEU MINISTERII PRINCIPALIS (theandric power belonging to Christ insofar as He is man)

- Grace conferred must be merited by Him who confers (title to excellence); thus the Sacrament is performed in Christ's name, and thus must be instituted by Him in some way.
- God alone is the *causa principalis Sacramenti* in the person of Christ, belonging to Him without restriction; creatures can only be ministerial causes of the Sacrament.

X *Question as to whether Christ determined the sacramental signs specifically or generically*

- Christ instituted all seven Sacraments of the New Law (*per se ipsum*).
- Trent leaned towards the notion that His institution was direct and immediate; Holy Writ insinuates both the nature and expression (e.g. Jas 5:14 on Holy Anointing).

^ *Distinction between substance and the administration of the Sacraments.*

- St. Pius X and Pius XII, following Trent, reaffirm that the Church has no right to change the substance of the Sacrament, that is, those things under Scripture and Tradition that our Lord has determined as having to be preserved in the sacramental sign.
 - Each sacramental sign possesses a *formal element* (grace and the efficacious signification) and a *material element* (expression of internal effects by a suitable outward sign)..
- Church has power over the Sacraments *salva eorum substantia*, and can add or subtract things that deal with the administration of the Sacraments, provided this does not disrupt the substance.

Did Christ institute precise matter and form?

- It is a certain doctrine that Christ did not institute each Sacrament down to their last individuating aspect; He did indicate the form and matter of Baptism and of Eucharist (matter of Penance and Matrimony are inherent to the Sacrament itself.)
- Practice of the Church indicates that she had been given some latitude in using a suitable sign; had our Lord determined matter and form *in specie*, the Church never would have changed them.
 - A definite relation exists between the Church and the Sacraments, as she depends upon them for her existence and growth and belongs to her domain in fulfilling her office of sanctifying.
- Substance of the Sacrament pertains to its meaning; the Sacraments are summarized and concentrated in Christ even before they are individuated.
- Sacraments are not mere isolated signs; since Christ is the primordial Sacrament, it is unnecessary to prove their origin from a specific word of the God-man.

12. Sevenfold number of the Sacraments

Man truly encounters God in the Sacraments by His grace.

- Sacraments are regarded as form of everlasting life, sanctifying every duty and action of Christian life; they are not limited to a specific instant of time, but are enveloped in a wealth of secondary? signs that enhance (not increase!) the value of the Sacrament (thus the practice of the Church to ritualize the Sacraments).
- Seven sacred signs instituted by Christ are the *sacramenta maiora*, while the other rites (sacramentals) are the *sacramenta minora*.
- St. Peter Lombard in his *Sententia* stated the number of Sacraments to be seven; Trent definitively declared there

to be seven Sacraments, no more, no less, all as efficacious signs instituted by Christ that confer grace.

> *Sacraments consecrate stages of human life*

1. *As a parallel between material and spiritual realities'*. Baptism = birth; Confirmation = growth and maturity; Eucharist = nourishment; Penance = recovery; Holy Anointing = convalescence; Matrimony = perpetuation of the material order; Holy Orders = perpetuation of the spiritual order.
2. *From the aspect of supplying for defects of sin'*. Baptism = life to the soul; Confirmation = growth from spiritual infancy; Eucharist = spiritual nourishment; Penance = remedy for actual sin; Holy Anointing = vestiges of sin left upon soul; Holy Orders = counteracts dissolution of spiritual community; Matrimony = counteracts personal concupiscence and physical distinction of the community.
3. *From the aspect of the virtues'*. Baptism = Faith; Confirmation = fortitude; Eucharist = charity; Penance = justice; Holy Anointing = hope; Holy Orders = prudence (opposed to ignorance); Matrimony = temperance.

13. Minister of the Sacraments

> *Sacraments in relation to causality.*

- Christ is the chief cause of the institution of the Sacraments by way of His divine nature; He is the instrumental cause by way of his human nature.
- The Church is the efficient cause of the institution of some of the Sacraments insofar as it was left to her to determine a particular suitable sign (e.g. imposition of hands for Holy Orders).
 - Secundum quid, the Church is the efficient cause of all the Sacraments in that she embellishes all the Sacraments with rites and sacramentals.
 - The Church is the cause of the administration of the Sacraments, in that, by her intention she directs the action of the secondary minister.

> *Who can be the secondary minister?*

- *Homo viator ratione praeditus* (wayfarer endowed with reason): full command of reason is required to combine matter and form and to apply it to an individual recipient.
- Not every such person can administer all the Sacraments (Trent); a certain power is necessary for the confecting of certain Sacraments by way of sacerdotal ordination: no such specific power necessary for baptism or marriage.

> *Intention of the secondary minister*

- Scholastics admit that intention is required for the actual confecting of the Sacraments.
 - Pre-Tridentine theologians debated as to whether the intention had to be verbal (personal agreement).
 - Trent (*De Sacramentis*, can 11) states that an intention is necessary to validate a Sacrament (kind of intention was not specified, whether internal or external).
- Distinction between *attention* (concerns the mind) and *intention* (concerns the will):
 1. Attention
 - *Internal attention* deals with an internal psychological awareness of what one is doing.
 - *External attention* deals with the exclusion of external acts incompatible with the outward act one is performing; mind sufficiently applied to action even though subject may be thinking of something else (this is required for validity of the Sacrament).
 2. Intention (*actus voluntatis in aliquem finem tendentis*)
 - The will is an internal faculty with two modes, external (verbal) and internal (mental).
 - For a Sacrament to be valid, it is necessary that the minister have the intention to do what the

Church intends with regard to that specific Sacrament.

- Intention of the minister is required due to the nature of the ministerial act; minister is still a free agent and must want to act as a representative.
- Validity requires:
 1. proper placing of matter and form;
 2. involves an internal intention which requires external attention;
 3. internal intention to intend the outward rite as Christian divine worship

14. Sacramental act as an *actus humanus*

INTENTIO

ACTUS (disposition of will present throughout entire action and present before it)

VIRTUALIS (conceived before action and continues virtually throughout the action; *intentio habitualis* in St. Thomas)

HABITUALIS (disposition of will conceived before action begins and not really present through the act, though not influencing or affecting the moral integrity of the act)

Actual intention not always possible because of frequent distractions, but habitual intention is not sufficient.

- Human minister acts as an instrument of Christ and must intend to do at least what the Church intends; Church cannot pass judgment on the internal intention of her ministers.
 - *A positive contrary intention* will invalidate a Sacrament.
- By Christ's Passion, the Sacraments derive their power* (IIa q.63 a.5)
- Ministers of the Church do not by their own power confer the Sacraments, but it is by Christ; recipient receives effects that liken him to Christ and not to the minister. (IIa q.64 a.5)
 - If a minister is an instrument, then what difference does the intention make? (IIa q. 64 a.8)
 - An inanimate instrument has motion whereby it is moved by the principal agent; no intention necessary or even possible.
 - An animate instrument is not only moved, but moves himself; even interiorally, minister is not entirely passive and therefore an intention is needed.
 - Minister of the Sacrament acts *i/z persona ecclesiae*, and the words are expression of the Church's faith.
 - Unbelief does not hinder the confectio of a Sacrament (a.9).
 - It is of dogma that faith is not necessary in the administration of Baptism and grace is not necessary in the minister of any Sacrament (cf. 1 Cor 1:12-16, 1 Cor 4:1); all that is required is a virtual intention and a minimum amount of attention.

Jurisdiction and validity.

JURISDICTION

EXTERNAL FORUM

SACRAMENTAL

INTERNAL FORUM

EXTRA-SACRAMENTAL

The Church possesses the power of jurisdiction by divine institution and this is closely bound to the power of Orders; jurisdiction is the power to govern the faithful for the supernatural purpose for which the Church was

established by Christ (cf. CIC 1917, can. 108, 196).

- Jurisdiction is not necessary for validity of all the Sacraments (under normal circumstances), but for the *licitly*, Confession and Marriage are invalid if performed by one lacking jurisdiction (lack of faculties) as such a state presupposes contempt on the hierarchical structure of the Church.

15. Recipient of the Sacrament

Right disposition is necessary for fruitful reception of the Sacraments.

- Trent { *De Sacramentis*, can. 6): not placing an obstacle (*obex*) is an indispensable condition for the reception of Sacramental grace.
 - *Sacramentum validum et informale*. Sacrament, although received, is rendered fruitless by an obstacle that prevents reception of grace.
 - *simulata dispositio*, pretending to will something which one does not will; caused by unbelief, scorn, observing a rite different from what the Church proscribes in conferring the Sacrament, or by approaching the Sacrament without proper devotion.
- He who never consents receives neither grace nor character of the Sacrament received; positive will of Christ never forces benefits upon man.

¶ Plid reception.

- Valid reception requires that the subject have the capacity to make a free act (thus be living and have sufficiently empowered reason).
- *Valid reception* is not synonymous with *worthy reception*, disposition is needed to receive sacramental grace (which is a form), implying a receptive attitude to it; a Sacrament does not fulfill its whole purpose if it does not confer grace.

Intention on the part of the recipient

- Generally, all the recipient needs is a habitual intention to receive the Sacrament; matrimony requires a virtual intention since the recipients are also the ministers.

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*Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam.
Sit nomen Domini benedictum in saecula. Amen*

TRACTUS DE SACRAMENTIS IN GENERE

in accordance with the tract as laid out in the
Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas
Illa qq. 60-83

A compiled outline taken from the course
De Sacramentis in Genere (THEO 404),
as organized, presented, and lectured by Rev. Robert A. Skeris, D.D., S.T.D.,
Christendom College, Front Royal, VA
Spring 1997

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Quid retribuam Dominus pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi?
A.D. MMI